

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SINGAP 02256 271136Z

50

ACTION ITF-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 IO-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 SS-15 SR-02 ORM-01

SCA-01 VO-03 IGA-01 INSE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 AID-05

NSC-05 NSCE-00 EUR-12 /074 W
----- 073002

R 270910Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2671

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL MEDAN

CINCPAC

CINCPACFLT

CINCPACREP GUAM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 2256

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: SREF, VS, SN

SUBJ: VIETNAMESE REFUGEES - SINGAPORE SITREP

REFS: A. SINGAPORE 2224; B. SINGAPORE 2228

1. ACCORDING DAO SOURCE, SEVERAL MORE VESSELS CARRYING VIETNAMESE REFUGEES ARRIVED SINGAPORE DURING THE PAST THREE DAYS. ACCORDING THIS SOURCE, TOTAL NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES NOW IN SINGAPORE HAS RISEN TO APPROXIMATELY 849. MORE THAN 500 ARE CURRENTLY ON ST. JOHN'S ISLAND AND THE REMAINDER ARE REPORTEDLY BEING PROCESSED BY SINGAPORE IMMIGRATION BEFORE BEING ALLOWED TO JOIN THEM.

2. LOCAL UNHCR REP LUSCOM HAS PROVIDED DCM WITH COPIES OF EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN UNHCR REP FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA, KADRY, AND TAY SEOW HUAH, SECOND PERMSEC, MINDEF. LETTER FROM TAY DATED MAY 14 STATES: (A) GOS "DESIRES TO ENTER INTO AN
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PAGE 02 SINGAP 02256 271136Z

AGREEMENT WITH YOUR HIGH COMMISSIONER WITH VIEW TO SEEKING

PERMANENT SOLUTIONS FOR THE REFUGEE PROBLEM IN SINGAPORE."

(B) "IT IS THE INTENTION OF SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT UNDER ARRANGEMENTS TO BE AGREED WITH YOUR OFFICE THAT SUCH REFUGEES AND ALL OTHER ARRIVING REFUGEES BE HOUSED IN TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION ON ST. JOHN'S ISLAND." (C) UNHCR IS REQUESTED "TO SEEK PERMANENT SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF THESE PERSONS WHILST PROVIDING ADEQUATE CARE AND MAINTENANCE FOR EACH OF THEM UNTIL THEIR RESETTLEMENT IN COUNTRIES OF DURABLE ASYLUM. APART FROM THE FINANCING OF THE ABOVE, YOUR ORGANIZATION IS REQUESTED TO ARRANGE AND FINANCE TRAVEL EXPENSES OUT OF SINGAPORE ON THE PART OF EACH REFUGEE WHO HAS TO BE RESETTLED." (D) REQUEST CONFIRMATION IN WRITING IF THIS ARRANGEMENT IS ACCEPTABLE TO UNHCR.

3. REPLY DATED MAY 17 SIGNED BY KADRY STATES:

(A) "WE NOTE WITH SATISFACTION YOUR GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION ON ST. JOHN'S ISLAND FOR ABOUT 180 PERSONS FROM SOUTH VIETNAM WHO ARE AT PRESENT IN SINGAPORE, AS WELL AS TO OTHERS WHO MAY STILL ARRIVE." (B) "OUR OFFICE IS READY TO ASSUME FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN THE RESOURCES MADE AVAILABLE TO US FOR THE CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF THESE PERSONS DURING THEIR TEMPORARY STAY ON ST. JOHN'S ISLAND." (C) THE UNHCR "WELCOMES THE WILLINGNESS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER THE GRANTING OF PERMANENT RESIDENCE IN SINGAPORE TO SOME PERSONS AMONG THE GROUPS REFERRED TO." (D) "OUR OFFICE WILL MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO TRY AND FACILITATE THE VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION OF THOSE PERSONS WHO EXPRESS THE WISH TO RETURN TO THEIR COUNTRY OR, ALTERNATIVELY, TO PROMOTE THE RESETTLEMENT TO OTHER COUNTRIES OF THOSE WHO WILL NOT REMAIN IN SINGAPORE AND DO NOT WISH TO RETURN HOME." (E) OUR OFFICE WILL ALSO MAKE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS AS APPROPRIATE AND WITHIN RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ENSURE THAT THE TRAVEL COSTS OF THOSE REPATRIATED OR RESETTLED ARE COVERED.

4. WITH THE CONTINUING ARRIVAL OF REFUGEES INTO SINGAPORE THE UNHCR AND ICEM REPRESENTATIVES ARE CONCERNED THAT GOS MAY RECONSIDER DECISION TO LET REFUGEES ASHORE UNLESS THEY SEE THAT A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER ARE LEAVING. FRENCH EMBASSY HAS ALREADY AGREED TO TAKE SOME AND SINGAPORE HAS ALREADY TAKEN 109 FISHERMEN OF CANTONESE ORIGIN (NOT INCLUDED IN 849 FIGURE).
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PAGE 03 SINGAP 02256 271136Z

THEREFORE, BOTH UNHCR AND ICEM REPRESENTATIVES ARE ANXIOUS THAT U.S. PROCESS ASAP THE 69 REFUGEES WHICH ARE THE SUBJECT OF REF B.

5. UNHCR REP HAS ALSO BEGUN TO SUBMIT TO EMBASSY SPECIFIC CASES OF REFUGEES WHOM GOS WILL NOT TAKE AND UNHCR BELIEVES USG SHOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER. EMBASSY ASSUMES FROM AMBASSADOR BROWN'S STATEMENT OF MAY 5 RE "THIRD CATEGORY"

REFUGEES THAT USG WILL CONSIDER SPECIFIC CASES FOR PAROLE
"ON A CASE-BY-CASE OR CLASS-BY-CLASS BASIS" IF GOS REFUSES
TO TAKE THEM AND UNHCR REFERS THEM TO US. EMBASSY WILL REVIEW
THESE REFERRALS AND SUBMIT TO DEPARTMENT FOR POSSIBLE PAROLE
THOSE CASES WHICH EMBASSY BELIEVES HAVE LEGITIMATE CLAIM
TO SUCH STATUS. CRONK

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